

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-7, 9-10, 13-16, 23-34, 39, 43, 45-51 and 55-56 are pending in the present application. By this Amendment, the specification is amended; claims 12, 44 and 52-54 are cancelled; claims 1, 10, 13 and 23 are amended; and claims 55-56 are added. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present claims in view of the following remarks.

I. Formal Matters:

November 26, 2003 Telephone Interview

Applicants thank Examiner Ogden for discussing the present application during a November 26, 2003 telephone interview. Applicants have amended the claims as shown above as a result of the telephone interview.

Claim Amendments

Previously presented claims 1, 10 and 23 have been amended as shown above to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claims 12 and 44 into each of these claims.

New independent claim 55 is a new independent claim containing the claim features of previously presented independent claim 10 in combination with previously presented dependent claim 15. In particular, new independent claim 55 is directed to a sprayable thickened hard surface cleaning composition comprising, *inter alia*, (a) from about 0.1 wt-% to about 20.0 wt-% of at least one detergent builder selected from tripolyphosphates; salts of alkali metal borates, phosphates, carbonates and bicarbonates; and mixtures thereof; (b) from about 0.1 wt-% to about 5 wt-% of at least one thickening agent effective to provide increased viscosity, said at least one thickening agent comprising a xantham gum; (c) from about 0.1 wt-% to about 3.0 wt-% of an alkali metal hydroxide to provide a pH of about 10 to about 14; (d) from about 0.5 wt-% to about 5.0 wt-% of an anionic surfactant to provide detergency to the composition; (e) from about 0.0 wt-% to about 5 wt-% of a fatty acid stabilizer effective to maintain a homogenous mixture of said at least one detergent builder, at least one thickening agent, and alkali metal hydroxide; (f) from about 0.0 wt-% to about 2.0 wt-% of a metal ion chelator; and (g) water; wherein the composition is substantially free of chlorine. New dependent claim 56 depends from

new independent claim 55 and further recites that the thickening agent further comprises one or more polycarboxylate polymers.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-4, 6-7, 9-10, 13-16, 23-34, 39, 43, 45-51 and 55-56 are allowable over the art of record for at least the following reasons.

II. Prior Art Rejections:

Claims 1-4, 6-7, 9-10, 13-16, 23-34, 39, 43 and 45-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,981,457 issued to Ahmed (hereinafter "Ahmed"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 10 and 23 are allowable over the teaching of Ahmed given the incorporation of allowable subject matter from claims 12 and 44 into independent claims 1, 10 and 23. Since claims 2-4, 6-7, 9, 13-16, 24-34, 39, 43 and 45-51 depend from independent claims 1, 10 and 23, and recite additional claim features, the teaching of Ahmed cannot make obvious claims 2-4, 6-7, 9, 13-16, 24-34, 39, 43 and 45-51.

Regarding new claims 55-56, Applicants respectfully submit that the teaching of Ahmed fails to teach or suggest Applicants' claimed invention embodied by independent claim 55. In particular, the teaching of Ahmed fails to teach or suggest a sprayable composition for cleaning a hard surface, wherein the sprayable composition comprises a thickening agent in the form of a xantham gum. There is no suggestion in the teaching of Ahmed to one of ordinary skill in the art to prepare a sprayable cleaning composition containing a xantham gum. The teaching of Ahmed does not mention or suggest xantham gums as a suitable thickening agent for sprayable compositions containing the components as recited in claim 55.

Given that the teaching of Ahmed fails to teach or suggest Applicants' claimed cleaning composition as featured in Applicants' independent claim 55, the teaching of Ahmed cannot make obvious Applicants' claimed invention embodied in independent claim 55. Since claim 56 depends from independent claim 55, and recite additional claim features, the teaching of Ahmed cannot make obvious claim 56. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully allowance of new claims 55-56.

III. Conclusion:

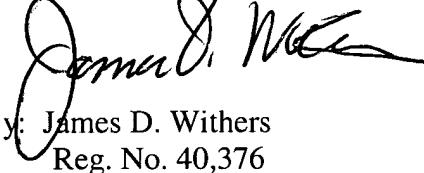
For at least the reasons given above, Applicants submit that claims 1-4, 6-7, 9-10, 13-16, 23-34, 39, 43, 45-51 and 55-56 define patentable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of these claims.

No additional fees are believed due; however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 13-2725.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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